

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

COMMUNICATING

(In pursuance of a resolution of the Senate of the 6th inst.)

INFORMATION CONCERNING THE PURCHASE OF

FIRE ENGINES.

DECEMBER 13, 1820.

Printed by order of the Senate of the United States.

WASHINGTON:

PRINTED BY GALES & SEATON.

1820.

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

In compliance with a resolution of the Senate, of the 6th December, requesting, that the agent employed under the act, entitled "an act authorizing the purchase of fire engines, and building houses for the safe keeping of the same," should report, in the manner stated in the said resolution, his conduct in execution of the said act, I now transmit to the Senate a report from the agent, which communicates all the information which has been desired.

JAMES MONROE.

December 12th, 1820.

To the Bureau of the Census
Washington, D. C.
Is requested that the agent assigned under the act of March 3, 1907, for the purpose of ascertaining the number of the engines, and holding the same, should report in the name of the said engines, in the said report, the number in connection of the said engines, in the said report, a report from the agent, which contains all the information which has been desired.

JAMES MONROE

January 1st, 1908

WASHINGTON, *December 11th*, 1820.

To the President of the United States.

SIR: In obedience to a resolution of the Senate of the United States, requesting the President of the United States to cause the agent employed under the act, entitled "An act authorizing the purchase of fire engines, and for building houses for the safe-keeping of the same," to inform the Senate, if said act is carried into complete effect; if not, to what degree, and why not *fully*; and, also, if a warrant has been issued from the Treasury Department for the sum appropriated; and, if so, *when* issued; I have the honor to state, that, in proceeding to carry into effect the act referred to, I caused notices to be inserted at Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, inviting proposals for furnishing the engines. That, in consequence of proposals received, among others, from Messrs. Perkins and Bacon, of Philadelphia, I was induced to go in person to that place, in order to investigate more particularly the character of the engines executed by them, which were professed to be of an improved kind, and to endeavour to procure more favorable terms than had been offered. That, eventually, I did contract with the persons above named, for furnishing the engines, at a reduction of one hundred and fifty dollars on each, from their first proposals. That, under date of October 22d, 1819, I was advised of the completion of one of the engines, and that the other would be shortly completed; I thereupon applied for, and obtained, a warrant, dated the 4th of November, 1819, for the sum appropriated by the act referred to, which sum was deposited to my credit, in the Patriotic Bank of this city. On the 15th of December, one, and on the 3d of January following, the other, engine arrived here.

In procuring the rivit-hose, and its appendages, I have not been so successful. I could not learn that this article was manufactured any where except by the original patentees, Messrs. Sellers and Pen-nock, of Philadelphia. Upon inquiry of them, I was satisfied, that, taking into view the great reduction in the price of materials and labor, their demands were exorbitantly high, and spent considerable time, in attempting, by direct negotiation, as well as through a friend at Philadelphia, and their agent (Dr. Ott) at this place, to reduce them to reasonable terms, but without much prospect of success. At length I received a proposition from Dr. Ott, to furnish the articles above eight per cent. lower than the manufacturers' prices, and, on the 1st day of June last, entered into a written contract with him in conformity: and, upon his giving security, advanced the estimated amount of the articles. The death of Dr. Ott happening shortly afterwards, produced some unexpected difficulties, which my subse-

quent correspondence with Messrs. Sellers and Pennock, copies of which are annexed, will explain. I have only to add, under this head, that the articles having arrived here, I am assured it is in the contemplation of Dr. Ott's administrators to reclaim them, in which event they would be immediately turned over to me. It is hoped the decision of this point will not be much longer delayed.

The annexed abstract, marked A, exhibits the expenditures already incurred, amounting to \$2,590 49, which, deducted from the appropriation, leaves the sum of \$1,909 51, applicable to the erection of engine houses. By the terms of the law, these houses are to be located, one, near the Capitol, the other, near the President's house. They ought to be placed in situations the most accessible and conspicuous; and, therefore should be erected in a style corresponding with the buildings, to which they would appear as appendages. It is very obvious, that the sum in hand would go but a little way towards accomplishing this object; it was, therefore, thought advisable to construct a temporary house, out of refuse lumber, at the Capitol, for one engine, and to deposite the other in the offices attached to the President's house, until some further provision was made.

I have the honor to be,

Most respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL LANE,

Commissioner Public Buildings.

Philadelphia, 8 mo. 1, 1820.

COL. LANE.

Respected Friend: On hearing of the lamented death of Doctor Ott, we wrote thee, enclosing an order given us by him for fire apparatus for the Capitol and President's House, requesting thy authority for proceeding to complete the order. Not having heard from thee, we are apprehensive our letter must have miscarried. We therefore beg leave to repeat the substance of it. Dr. Ott, in his late visit to this city, contracted with us to furnish the following apparatus: 600 feet engine hose, per foot 65 cents; 100 feet to be in sections of 25 feet, the remainder 50 feet sections. Fourteen connecting screws, each \$4 25. Two pair wrenches \$1. Two hose carriages, made to carry 500 feet, one marked Capitol U. S. the other President's house, each \$225. Repairing anvil and compressor \$2. Two elbow pipes, each \$5. They are in considerable forwardness: the hose carriages are now nearly completed: the hose is finished; the connecting screws ready to be attached, and all the other articles (elbow pipes excepted, which can be prepared without delay) are made. We

would be obliged by thy advising us whether these articles are to be transmitted to thee, when in a condition to be shipped, and whether payment therefor will be assumed by thee, as we should not like to refer for payment to Dr. Ott's estate, presuming there will be the usual delay of one year in the settlement of it. When Dr. Ott was in the city, he was much inclined to adopt connecting boxes in lieu of swivel screws. He was to have written us in relation to them. On this subject we wish thee would confer with our mutual friend A. Coyle, who is apprized of the advantages of the connecting boxes.

We remain thy friends,

SELLERS & PENNOCK.

Washington, August 3, 1820.

GENTLEMEN: Your letter of the 1st instant is received. I had contracted with the late Dr. Ott for the delivery of the articles you mention, but at prices somewhat lower than those quoted by you. I advanced the estimated amount of the articles, of course I cannot pay for them again; but must look to the administrators of the doctor's estate for a performance of the contract. I need not add that the articles would be received if in conformity with the contract. I was to pay freight. There is no question about the solvency of the doctor's estate.

Your very obedient servant,

S. LANE,

Commissioner Public Buildings.

Messrs. SELLERS & PENNOCK.

Philadelphia, 9th mo. 25th, 1820.

COL. S. LANE.

Respected Friend: We have shipped by the Hilan, captain John Hand, the fire apparatus ordered by the late Dr. Ott, (under insurance) to the care of our mutual friend Andrew Coyle of your city, who is authorized by us to deliver the same and receive payment therefor, according to the annexed invoice, adding freight (which will be thirty dollars) and such other charges as may be incidental to their transmission.

We remain thy friends,

SELLERS & PENNOCK.

Washington, September 28, 1820.

GENTLEMEN: In my letter of August the 3d I informed you of having advanced to Dr. Ott the estimated amount of the articles which he ordered of you, and that I could not pay for them again. From your now advising, that these articles are shipped, to be delivered to me upon paying for them, I am apprehensive that my letter has miscarried, and hasten to inform you of its purport, that you may give such further orders as to you may seem best. The articles cannot be received upon the condition mentioned.

Your obedient servant,

S. LANE,

Commissioner Public Buildings.

Messrs. SELLERS & PENNOCK.

A.

ABSTRACT of disbursements made by Samuel Lane, Commissioner of Public Buildings, on account of Fire Engines.

DATE.	VOUCH- ERS.	TO WHOM PAID.	ON WHAT ACCOUNT PAID.	AMOUNT.
1819, December 15	1	Joseph Hand	For freight of one engine from Philadelphia, \$20 00 } wharfage - - - - - 1 00 }	\$21 00
" 16	2	Thomas M'New	For hauling do. from Georgetown to the capitol -	2 00
1820, January 3	3	Moses Hawkins	For freight of one large and 3 small engines -	26 00
" 7	4	William Smith	For hauling three engines from Navy Yard to President's house - - - - -	2 00
" 31	5	Perkins & Bacon	For two first class fire engines, with pipes, hose, &c. complete, at \$600 - - - \$1,200 00 For two forcing pumps, with carriages, hose, &c. at \$80 - - - - - 160 00 For one domestic engine, with pipes, &c. at 50 00 Insurance on \$1,410 at 1½ per cent. \$17 ⁶² / ₁₀₀ , 2 policies, \$2 - - - - - 19 62	1,429 62
May 8	6	David Stewart	One large bell, and fixing the same, \$8 25. Pair of strong lamps, and fixing same, \$13. Ropes with tugs, and covering same with leather, \$13 62, for engine	34 87
June 1	7	David Ott	Advanced upon his contract for hose, &c. (O. Carr secu'ty)	1,075 00
			Errors excepted.	Dolls. 2,590 49

Washington, December 11, 1820.

SAMUEL LANE, *Commissioner Public Buildings.*

